ചെയ്തില്ലെങ്കിലും വിശേഷിച്ചും ഇതിനെ അനുകൂലിയ്ക്കുകയെങ്കിലും ചെയ്യേണ്ടതായിരുന്നു. ഇതു രണ്ടും ചെയ്യാതെ അദ്ദേഹം ഇങ്ങിനെ ഒരു ഏതിർപ്പുകൊണ്ടുവന്നതിൽ ഞാൻ വളരെ അത്ഭുതപ്പെടുന്നു.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. പി. വള്ളോൻ.—ഈ നിശ്ചയത്തെ ഞാൻ ബലമായി പിൻതാങ്ങുന്നു. ശൈശവ വിവാഹം അധികവും ഇപ്പോൾ അധഃകൃതരുടെയിടയിലാണ് നടക്കുന്നതു്. പുലയർ, കുടുമിച്ചെട്ടി മുതലായസമുദായക്കാരുടെയിടയിൽ ഒരു പെൺകുട്ടിയുണ്ടെങ്കിൽ ഋതുമതിയാകുന്നതിനു മുമ്പു് വിവാഹം ചെയ്തില്ലെങ്കിൽ ജാതിയിൽ നിന്നും ഭ്രഷ്ടാക്കണമെന്നൊരു നിയമമുണ്ടു്. അതനുസരിച്ചാണ് അധഃകൃതരുടെയിടയിൽ ശൈശവ വിവാഹം ധാരാളം നടന്നുവരുന്നതു്. ഈ ഒരേർപ്പാടു് ഗവൺമെൻറിൽ നിന്നും നിരുത്തൽ ചെയ്യേണ്ടതത്യാവശ്യമാണു്. അതിലേയ്ക്കു് എന്തെങ്കിലും ഒരു നിയമം നടപ്പിൽ വരുത്താത്തപക്ഷം ഈ സമുദായങ്ങൾ അനുഭവിയ്ക്കുന്ന കഷ്ടതകൾ വളരെ ദയനീയമായിട്ടുള്ളതായിരിയ്ക്കും; അതിനാൽ ഈ നിശ്ചയത്തെ ഗവൺമെൻറു് സ്വീകരിച്ചു് ഉടനെ ശൈശവ വിവാഹം നിരുത്തൽ ചെയ്യേണ്ടതാണെന്നുള്ള എൻറെ അഭിപ്രായത്തെ ഇവിടെ പ്രസ്താവിച്ചുകൊണ്ടു് ഞാൻ ഈ പ്രമേയത്തെ ബലമായി പിൻതാങ്ങുന്നു.

**Mr. P. S. Kesavan Nambudiri.**—May I know whether the Government are satisfied as to the necessity for such a piece of legislation?

**Dr. A. R. Menon.**—What is the Government's position? Are they going to oppose it?

**Mr. U. Kandar Menon.**—No. They are going to remain neutral.

**Mr. P. S. Kesavan Nambudiri.**—In that case I do not press the motion.

*Resolution was, with leave, withdrawn.*

## 9. Levying of water-tax in Ernakulam Municipality.

**Mr. A. Sankara Poduval.**—I beg to move the following resolution. "*This Council recommends to Government that water-tax within the Ernakulam Municipal limits be levied quarterly, calculated on the excess consumed by the rate-payer over the allotted quantity for the said three months*".

The object of the resolution is quite clear. Metering was resorted to prevent waste and to economise the consumption of water. A free grant of fifteen gallons of water, per head, is intended to be made, and the calculation is made every month. The total consumption of water within the Municipal limits has no doubt been appreciably reduced, but I fear that

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many of the poorer classes, have resorted to the old practice of using both tank and well-water, even for domestic purposes. Hydrants and house taps, have yet to be put up, in about half the Municipal area. The free use of Alwaye water has improved the health of the city, and it would be unfortunate if the restriction imposed upon the citizens should cause a reversion to the old order of things. The use of impure water, will in course of time bring about a deterioration in the standard of the general health of the public.

The poorer classes cannot afford to pay for water. Hydrants planted on the main roads of a part of the city cannot serve the purpose. A sense of decency prevents bathing by the side of public hydrants, and payment for a bath is out of the question. Women, even of the working classes, avoid carrying water from the taps on the roads, as they are loath to mix up with all sorts and conditions of people frequenting the hydrants. Poor people have been making use of the taps in adjoining houses for their requirements, and rate-payers have been stinting in their liberality and charity, in this behalf, since the imposition of the cess on water. The requirements of a house vary every month, and when the quantity of free supply is limited, the inclination to permit outsiders to use the water from the taps naturally wanes. Charity, has indeed been a note-worthy virtue in the Cochinite, but the apprehension of exceeding the free allowance, acts as a deterrent to most rate-payers in permitting poor neighbours the use of their water taps. If the object aimed at by this resolution, be accepted, the rate-payer would be in a better position to help his neighbours with water, than he would otherwise be. He can take into account the average for three months, and help his neighbours to a certain extent with water. We notice a general disinclination to pay for water to help those in need of it. Neither Government nor the Municipality suffers by the acceptance of this resolution.

Theoretically, no doubt, the free allowance of fifteen gallons, per head, is meant for the inmates of the house; but no one can complain if the free allowance be utilised for non-domestic purposes.

The authorities have to make provision for the allotted free supply, and it is of no consequence to them whether this supply be utilised for the personal use of the rate-payers or given away in charity. I make this proposal, in the interests of public health. The use of filthy water brings about disease of various kinds—contagious fevers, elephantiasis, etc., and the contagion spreads, affecting even those who have been observing principles of hygiene and sanitation.

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I am only requesting Government to make amends for the delay in laging out hydrants in all parts of the Municipal area. It may be that the rate-payer too, is in a way benefited. But I make the appeal mainly on behalf of the poor, and I trust that the House would be pleased to accept this resolution. I do not make a long speech at this late hour.

**Dr. A. R. Menon.**—I second it, because any way we were responsible for forcing this metre upon the people of Ernakulam. At that time we had no intention to give them trouble. I was not quite able to follow the argument of my friend, in saying that if this resolution is carried, it will be a blessing to the poor. However, I can understand one advantage of this. By quarterly returns even if we consume a larger quantity in one month no charge will be levied upon that. It may so happen that there will be some function in a particular month, and this excess quantity consumed in that month can be compensated by taking a lesser quantity in the following month. So he will have to pay nothing.

I think these facts should have been discussed in the Municipal Council itself. It will be consistent with the purpose in view, to discuss this question in the Municipal Council first and then it would be better to bring this resolution to this House. But in any case if it is of any help to the poor we will be only too glad to render any help whatever in carrying this resolution in this Council.

**Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.**—It is not quite clear to me how the poor are going to be benefited by this.

**Mr. A. Eachara Menon.**—May I know whether there are hydrants in all the places where people are living?

**Mr. A. Sankara Poduval.**—Half of Ernakulam is yet to be furnished.

*The House rose for the day at 5 p. m.*

C. J. MATHEW,
Secretary to the Council.

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